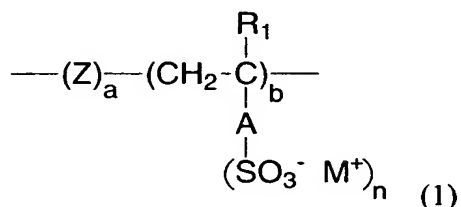


WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A color silver halide photographic element comprising gelatin, a support bearing at least one dye image forming unit selected from a dye image forming unit comprising at least one red sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a dye-forming coupler, a dye image forming unit comprising at least one green sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a dye-forming coupler, and a dye image forming unit comprising at least one blue sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a dye-forming coupler; and a polymer represented by Formula 1.



wherein:

A independently represents a bond or a group linking the polymer chain to the $\text{SO}_3^-\text{ M}^+$ group(s),

R_1 independently represents H or a lower alkyl group of from 1 to 4 carbon atoms,

M^+ independently represents an alkali or alkaline earth metal ion or an ammonium or substituted ammonium ion,

Z independently represents at least one ethylenically unsaturated, hydrophilic monomer, and

a and b represent the weight percent of the respective monomers wherein a is between 0 and 95%, b is between 5 and 100%, and n is 1 or 2; and

wherein the average molecular weight of the polymer is less than 300,000 and the total amount of the polymer contained in the silver halide element is greater than 1.0 % of the total amount of gelatin contained in the silver halide element.

2. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 1 wherein **b** is greater than 20 % by weight.

3. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 1 wherein **b** is greater than 50 % by weight.

4. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 1 wherein **b** is greater than 70 % by weight.

5. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 1 wherein **Z** is an acrylamide monomer.

6. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 1 wherein **A** is an acyl or ether group.

7. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 1 wherein **A** is $C(O)OR_2$, $C(O)NHR_2$, $C(O)NR_3R_2$, $OC(O)R_2$, and OR_2 , wherein R_2 represents an alkylene, cyclic alkylene, or ethyleneoxy group having from 1 to 10 carbon atoms, and R_3 is represents H or a lower alkyl group of from 1 to 4 carbon atoms.

8. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 5 wherein **A** is $C(O)OR_2$, $C(O)NHR_2$, $C(O)NR_3R_2$, $OC(O)R_2$, and OR_2 , wherein R_2 represents an alkylene, cyclic alkylene, or ethyleneoxy group having from 1 to 10 carbon atoms, and R_3 is represents H or a lower alkyl group of from 1 to 4 carbon atoms.

9. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 1 wherein the average molecular weight of the polymer is less than 200,000.

10. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 1 wherein the total amount of the polymer contained in the silver halide element is greater than 3.0 % of the total amount of gelatin contained in the silver halide element.

11. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 10 wherein the total amount of the polymer contained in the silver halide element is greater than 5.0 % of the total amount of gelatin contained in the silver halide element.

12. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 10 wherein the element comprises a dye image forming unit comprising at least one red sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a dye-forming coupler, a dye image forming unit comprising at least one green sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a dye-forming coupler, and a dye image forming unit comprising at least one blue sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a dye-forming coupler.

13. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 12 wherein the element comprises a cyan dye image forming unit comprising at least one red sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a cyan dye-forming coupler, a magenta dye image forming unit comprising at least one green sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a magenta dye-forming coupler, and a yellow dye image forming unit comprising at least one blue sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a yellow dye-forming coupler.

14. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 1 wherein the polymer is used in a gelatin containing layer as a partial gelatin replacement.

15. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 14 wherein the polymer replaces 5 % to 30% by weight of the gelatin contained in the layer.

16. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 14 wherein the polymer replaces 5 % to 20% by weight of the gelatin contained in the layer.

17. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 1 wherein the polymer is added to a gelatin containing layer as an addendum.

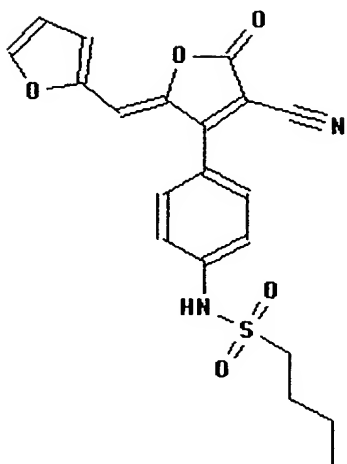
18. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 17 wherein the polymer is added in the amount of 5 % to 35 % by weight of the gelatin contained in the layer.

19. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 17 wherein the polymer is added in the amount of 5 % to 25 % by weight of the gelatin contained in the layer.

20. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 1 wherein the viscosity of a coating layer melt containing the polymer is no more than 100 % higher than the viscosity of the same layer melt without the polymer.

21. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 1 wherein the viscosity of a coating layer melt containing the polymer is no more than 50 % higher than the viscosity of the same layer melt without the polymer.

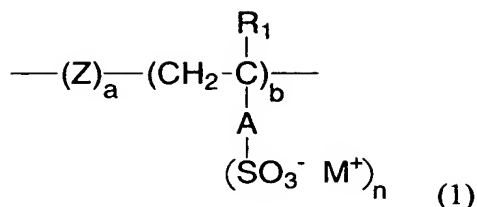
22. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 1 further comprising a dye of the following structure



23. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 22 wherein the dye is in the same layer as the polymer.

24. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 23 wherein the dye containing layer is a non-imaging layer.

25. A method of processing a color silver halide photographic element comprising gelatin, a support bearing at least one dye image forming unit selected from a dye image forming unit comprising at least one red sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a dye-forming coupler, a dye image forming unit comprising at least one green sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a dye-forming coupler, and a dye image forming unit comprising at least one blue sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a dye-forming coupler; and a polymer represented by Formula 1.



wherein:

A independently represents a bond or a group linking the polymer chain to the $\text{SO}_3^- \text{ M}^+$ group(s),

R_1 independently represents H or a lower alkyl group of from 1 to 4 carbon atoms,

M^+ independently represents an alkali or alkaline earth metal ion or an ammonium or substituted ammonium ion,

Z independently represents at least one ethylenically unsaturated, hydrophilic monomer,

and a and b represent the weight percent of the respective monomers where

a is between 0 and 95%,

b is between 5 and 100%, and

n is 1 or 2, and

wherein the average molecular weight of the polymer is less than 300,000 and the total amount of the polymer contained in the silver halide element is greater than 1.0 % of the total amount of gelatin contained in the silver halide element; said method comprising developing the silver halide element with a color developer, and then bleaching and fixing or bleach/fixing the silver halide element.

26. The method of claim 25 wherein b is greater than 20 % by weight.

27. The method of claim 25 wherein b is greater than 50 % by weight.
28. The method of claim 25 wherein b is greater than 70 % by weight.
29. The method of claim 25 wherein Z is an acrylamide monomer.
30. The color silver halide photographic element of claim 25 wherein A is an acyl or ether group.
31. The method of claim 30 wherein A is $C(O)OR_2$, $C(O)NHR_2$, $C(O)NR_3R_2$, $OC(O)R_2$, and OR_2 , wherein R_2 represents an alkylene, cyclic alkylene, or ethyleneoxy group having from 1 to 10 carbon atoms, and R_3 represents H or a lower alkyl group of from 1 to 4 carbon atoms.
32. The method of claim 29 wherein A is $C(O)OR_2$, $C(O)NHR_2$, $C(O)NR_3R_2$, $OC(O)R_2$, and OR_2 , wherein R_2 represents an alkylene, cyclic alkylene, or ethyleneoxy group having from 1 to 10 carbon atoms, and R_3 represents H or a lower alkyl group of from 1 to 4 carbon atoms.
33. The method of claim 25 wherein the average molecular weight of the polymer is less than 200,000.
34. The method of claim 25 wherein the total amount of the polymer contained in the silver halide element is greater than 3.0 % of the total amount of gelatin contained in the silver halide element.
35. The method of claim 25 wherein the total amount of the polymer contained in the silver halide element is greater than 5.0 % of the total amount of gelatin contained in the silver halide element.

36. The method of claim 25 wherein the element comprises a dye image forming unit comprising at least one red sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a dye-forming coupler, a dye image forming unit comprising at least one green sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a dye-forming coupler, and a dye image forming unit comprising at least one blue sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a dye-forming coupler.

37. The method of claim 25 wherein the element comprises a cyan dye image forming unit comprising at least one red sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a cyan dye-forming coupler, a magenta dye image forming unit comprising at least one green sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a magenta dye-forming coupler, and a yellow dye image forming unit comprising at least one blue sensitive silver halide emulsion layer having associated therewith a yellow dye-forming coupler.

38. The method of claim 25 wherein the polymer is used in a gelatin containing layer as a partial gelatin replacement.

39. The method of claim 38 wherein the polymer replaces 5 % to 30 % by weight of the gelatin contained in the layer.

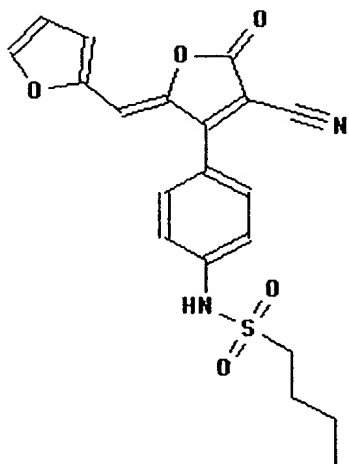
40. The method of claim 25 wherein the polymer is added to a gelatin containing layer as an addendum.

41. The method of claim 40 wherein the polymer is added in the amount of 5 % to 35 % by weight of the gelatin contained in the layer.

42. The method of claim 25 wherein the viscosity of a coating layer melt containing the polymer is no more than 100 % higher than the viscosity of the same layer melt without the polymer.

43. The method of claim 25 wherein the viscosity of a coating layer melt containing the polymer is no more than 50 % higher than the viscosity of the same layer melt without the polymer.

44. The method of claim 25 further comprising a dye of the following structure:



45. The method of claim 44 wherein the dye is in the same layer as the polymer.

46. The method of claim 45 wherein the dye containing layer is a non-imaging layer.